

## HOUSE RESOLUTION 12

By Gilmore

A RESOLUTION recognizing National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day on February 7, 2011.

WHEREAS, in an effort to raise awareness in Black communities in the United States about the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day, on February 7, 2011, has been designated as the occasion to bring forth the Black community in an attempt to raise cognizance about this world-wide devastating epidemic; and

WHEREAS, National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day recognizes the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Black communities, and the national sponsors have responded with HIV testing across the country. The objective of awareness is to counter the pandemic with a treatment community mobilization initiative targeted at the Black/African-American communities in the United States. The four specific focal points of the initiative are AIDS education, HIV testing, involvement, and treatment, with HIV testing being highlighted as the core of the operation; and

WHEREAS, National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day was founded by five organizations funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in 1999 to provide capacity building assistance to Black communities and organizations; the founding five organizations include Concerned Black Men, Inc. of Philadelphia, Health Watch Information and Promotion Services, Inc., Jackson State University Mississippi Urban Research Center, National Black Alcoholism and Addictions Council, and the National Black Leadership Commission on AIDS; and

WHEREAS, the CDC has estimated that more than one million adults and adolescents are living with the HIV infection in the United States, and HIV disproportionately affects

Blacks/African-Americans, raising the issue that they are the racial/ethnic group most affected by the virus. Blacks/African-Americans represent approximately twelve percent of the U.S. population, but account for almost half of all new HIV infections; and

WHEREAS, the rate of new HIV infection for Black/African-American women is nearly fifteen times as high as that of white women, and nearly four times that of Hispanic women; and

WHEREAS, the National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day program will be sponsored in Nashville, Tennessee, through the efforts of W.O.M.E.N., (Women On Maintaining Education and Nutrition), a community based program that focuses on women infected and affected by HIV/AIDS, STDs, domestic violence, substance abuse, cancer, homelessness, race relations and reconciliation; W.O.M.E.N.'s interests also include human-trafficking, women and family empowerment programs, family unity, and world interests; and

WHEREAS, dignified in its mission statement, W.O.M.E.N. enlightens, encourages, and educates women and families; since commencement in 1996, Women on Maintaining Education and Nutrition has provided support, advice, referral, education, and nutrition for people infected and affected by this travailing disease. This remarkable program affirms that HIV/AIDS is a community problem, and the staff and volunteers believe with stalwart resolve that a community response is required; and

WHEREAS, National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day sponsored in Nashville by W.O.M.E.N. will provide free HIV testing, in its effort to reach individuals at increased risk of becoming infected with HIV or, if already infected, prevent the transmitting of the virus to others; and

WHEREAS, HIV/AIDS is a devastating pandemic, and our great State is not immune from the scope of its impact. It is imperative that we, as a State, support the raising of awareness of HIV/AIDS and its potential to impact any of us. It is also essential that our State recognize how HIV/AIDS disproportionately affects the Black/African-American community, and that we join together to support any initiative that promotes education and personal responsibility; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, that we join in the

recognition of February 7, 2011, as the eleventh National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day and encourage all Tennesseans to educate themselves on the devastation caused by HIV and AIDS and the efforts which can be made to prevent the spread of this pandemic.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.